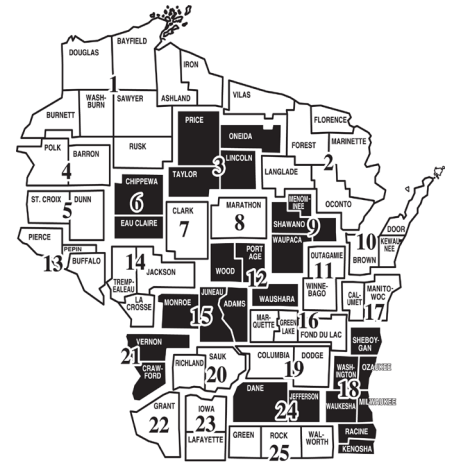


Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin

2022 Director Elections

Candidate Biographies



The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection announced the following candidates for the 2022 Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board director elections to be held May 2-25 in eight of the state's 25 districts.

Click a name below to view the biography of each district's candidate(s) or scroll down to view all candidates:

District 3 (Lincoln, Oneida, Price, Taylor)

- [Gary Kohn, Medford](#)
- [Mark Leder, Gleason](#)

District 6 (Chippewa, Eau Claire)

- [Douglas Danielson, Cadott](#)

District 9 (Menominee, Shawano, Waupaca)

- [Jeff Betley, Pulaski](#)

District 12 (Portage, Waushara, Wood)

- [Stephen Pankratz, Marshfield](#)

District 15 (Adams, Juneau, Monroe)

- [Sandra Madland, Lyndon Station](#)
- [Annette Trescher, Cashton](#)

District 18 (Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Sheboygan, Washington, Waukesha)

- [Rick Roden, West Bend](#)

District 21 (Crawford, Vernon)

- [Gail Klinkner, Viroqua](#)

District 24 (Dane, Jefferson)

- [Virgil Haag, Mount Horeb](#)
- [Tina Hinchley, Cambridge](#)
- [Carrie Mess, Johnson Creek](#)



Gary Kohn
 Kohn Dairy Farm
 N2611 County Rd E
 Medford WI 54451
 Residence: Taylor County

Director Biography

District 3 (Lincoln, Oneida, Price and Taylor)

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Lisa Children – Joshua, Todd, Scott
When did you begin dairy farming?	1985
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	120 Holsteins
Where do you ship your milk?	Grassland, Greenwood
Others actively involved in operation:	Lisa and our son Scott and his wife Katy
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	700 acres; 200 acres cash crops; 80 young stock, beef cattle etc.
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taylor County Farm Bureau Vice President (4 years) ▪ WFBF policy development committee (2 years) ▪ Farm First Dairy Cooperative delegate to annual meeting (2 years)
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taylor County Credit Union board director (12 years) ▪ Medford Cooperative board director (6 years)
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin get our check-off dollars to promote and advertise the dairy industry of Wi. I would like the opportunity to work with the other board directors to help DFW in promoting and educating consumers across the country and internationally of the quality and goodness of the products that dairy farmers of Wisconsin produce. I would also like to assure the farmers of Wisconsin that our advertising dollars are spent wisely.
What else should dairy producers in your district know about you?	With my experience on community and agriculture boards I believe that working together as a board you can build a strong organization moving forward. I feel this is my opportunity to give back to the Dairy industry that has served me well.

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Mark Leder
 Friesian-Knoll Farm
 W1048 County X
 Gleason, WI 54435
 Residence: Lincoln County

Director Biography

District 3 (Lincoln, Oneida, Price and Taylor)

When did you begin dairy farming?	1986
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	70; Registered Holsteins
Where do you ship your milk?	Foremost Farms - Milan
Others actively involved in operation:	Hired help
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	350 acres; 70 young stock, beef cattle etc.
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Farm Bureau ▪ Holstein Association
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lincoln County Dairy Breakfast
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	I want to make sure that our assessments dollars are being spent wisely and that we are getting the most bang for our dollar. I have been very happy with the changes our new CEO has implemented so far and I am looking forward to the future of Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin.
What else should dairy producers in your district know about you?	<p>I believe we (farmers) all need to be promoting our product, not just producing but all of us promoting our great industry and the quality dairy products we make.</p> <p>We need to continue to market and compete against plant based products and inform and educate consumers of the real nutritional value of dairy.</p>

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Doug Danielson
 Danann Dairy
 13100 County Highway EE
 Cadott 54727
 Residence: Chippewa County

Candidate Biography

District 6 (Chippewa, Eau Claire)

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Annie Children – Colette, Tyrel and Kelsey
When did you begin dairy farming?	1987
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	425; Registered Holsteins
Where do you ship your milk?	La Grandeur’s Hillside Dairy, Inc. Stanley
Others actively involved in operation:	Annie Danielson, Bob Rajek and Jordan Danielson, all Co-Managers.
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	950 acres farmed, 50 Holstein steers, 25 Holstein breeding bulls, 200 female replacements and other livestock
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	Wisconsin Farmers Union 3-years National Dairy Board Co-op member – Equity Cooperative River Country Cooperative
Community involvement	Big Drywood Lutheran Church – Current Trustee
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	I believe it is very important for me to be involved to support the future of the Wisconsin dairy industry.
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	I am a life long dairy farmer who is fully committed and vested in the dairy community and a sustainable lifestyle of Wisconsin agriculture.

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Candidate Biography

District 9 (Menominee, Shawano, Waupaca)



Jeff Betley
Betley Farms
W1630 Redwood Dr.
Pulaski, WI 54162
Residence: Shawano County

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Jena Children – Jacob
When did you begin dairy farming?	1991
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	2,500 Holsteins
Where do you ship your milk?	Land O'Lakes, Kiel WI
Others actively involved in operation:	Parents - Jack and Gloria, Jena and About 35 dedicated employees
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	4,500 acres; 5,000 young stock, beef cattle etc
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	
Community involvement	
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	To maximize value for our checkoff dollars and to increase transparency of where those dollars are spent.
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	

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Candidate Biography

District 12 (Portage, Waushara, Wood)



Stephen Pankratz
 Pankratz Farms LLC
 11031 county road V,
 Marshfield WI, 54449
 Residence: Wood County

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Barbara Children – Jonathan Pankratz, Matthew Pankratz, Kaylan Avila
When did you begin dairy farming?	1978
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	On average we are milking 140 cows and have about 20 dry cows. The breeds we work with are Holstein, Jerseys, Holstein- Jerseys crosses (hojos)
Where do you ship your milk?	Pankratz Farms has been shipping milk to Lynn Dairy since 1958. This dairy plants is located about 10 miles from the farm in the small village of Lynn WI.
Others actively involved in operation:	Barb and children- Jon, Matt, Kaylan; and three employees
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	Also on the farm there is a calf facility where we keep all Young animals under 15 months (about 200 animals). The animals that are over 15 months are off the farm where they are raised till they are about a month before calve (about 140 animals). At that point they are taken back to the main farm to calve (about 10 to 15 animals a month). The farm also sells around 60 Holstein beef calves at 750 pounds for finishing. The farm also runs 1800 Acer's of farm land. Of that acreage 1300 is for cash cropping together with his sons they run a custom cropping/grain storage business.
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<p>As a high school student I was very active in the local FFA. I continued to be active when my children were in FFA as young adults in the organization. I continue to be be active by helping when high school age employees want to show animals. I have also been asked by students that have taken our animals to the market sale at local fairs if I would honor them by bidding on their animals.</p> <p>The last 20 years I have had the privilege of being a member on the Equity board. I also have been a Wisconsin farm bureau member since taking over the farm.</p>
Community involvement	As a young man, I became a volunteer firefighter for Lincoln Township. I was a volunteer for about 30 years. Of those 30 years I was a fire chief for 6 of them. I stepped aside when I felt that the younger generation was better equipped to handle the demands of the job. I also was elected for 6 years as a supervisor on the Lincoln Township board. I'm also is a member of the knights of Columbus (KC member) for the last 25 years.
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	As a farmer and father that has three children actively pursuing lives/careers in the agriculture industry, specifically in the dairy aspect of agriculture, if elected, my goals are to help the industry continue to move forward by sharing my knowledge and perspectives that I have gained from the many years of being a devoted farmer. I plan to do this by being a representative (for the dairy industry) ot the general public, that does not have a close relationship with the agriculture/dairy industry, understand the economic hardships that farmers are facing recently. I also would actively purse finding

	<p>a larger market for ower products. Such as more markets in other states and other countries. Here in Wisconsin we produce high quality goods that need to be placed in a broader market. If elected will push to make these things happen.</p>
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	<p>My father, Lawrence Pankratz, started the farm in 1946 after returning from serving over seas in WWII. He started with 15 milking cows and 80 acres of land. On this farm him and his wife, olive, raised four children Steve being the youngest of the four. Lawrence grew the farm to 55 cows and 240 acres when Steve and his new wife took the farm over in 1978. He, also like his father raised three children on the farm. He grew the farm to what it is now over the next 40 years. In that time he has branched out to not only have dairy but to have cash crops, beef sales, a combining/harvesting business with his sons, grain storage business, and costem planting business with his two sons. He helped his son branch out even more into the agriculture industry when his son decided to start a business in grain trucking. Just recently him and his wife transferred the farm to an LLC and put his three children as the new owners. Again passing the legacy him and his father worked so hard to make onto the next generation. The LLC is now in the process of updating the milking equipment and expanding the dairy milking herd and young stock. They are expanding in hopes to accommodate the needs of not just one growing family on the farm but three families.</p>

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Candidate Biography

District 15 (Adams, Juneau, Monroe)



Sandra Madland
 Lydell Dairy LLC
 N864 County Road J
 Lyndon Station, WI 53944
 Residence: Juneau County

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Troy Children – Garrett, Theresa and Hohanna (adult children)
When did you begin dairy farming?	1991
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	500 Registered Holstein cows
Where do you ship your milk?	Scenic Central Milk Producers, Boscobel
Others actively involved in operation:	Two of our adult children are employed on our farm. Con, Garret is our Herdsman and daughter, Theresa, is the calf/youngstock manager
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	1,600 acres farmed 400 head of young stock and 75 head of dairy steers (sells as feeders)
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Board, current board chair. ▪ Juneau County Dairy Promotion Board, Vice-Chair ▪ Wisconsin District 5 Holstein Association Treasurer ▪ Juneau County Fair Dairy Committee, Chair
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Lyndon Station, Coordinator of Religious Education ▪ Juneau County Ag Industry and Recreation Society
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	The work that Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin does is so important to our industry. It is the one origination that includes all the dairy farmers in our state regardless of size, production methods, ownership structure, or location. We all have a stake in how well our product sells in the marketplace. There is always opportunity to strengthen our existing marketing partnerships and to explore new ventures. I would like to be involved with working on those opportunities. Dairy research into new and expanded products is very interesting to me. As our farm numbers continue to decrease, it is more and more important that dairy farmers’ voices continue to be heard to retain the dairy legacy that we have always had in Wisconsin.
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	My husband, Troy, and I are first generation dairy farmers. Without family support we started dairying with 32 cows in a rented barn. Through many hours of sweat equity and careful financial planning we have been able to grow out business. We are so proud of our two children that chose to come back to the farm and carry on what we worked so hard to establish. I’ve spent the last twenty plus years working with my own kids and so many others through 4-H, FFA and junior Holsteins. I loved being a dairy leader and now I’m so impressed with the achievements those kids have made and the contributions they are making in either production ag or industry to keep our vocation thriving. I’ve always been involved with dairy promotion, through our country fair, farm tours and many other outlets. I’ve taken cows to the park, the library, the community center, you name it. Putting out a positive message to the outside world helps keep me in a positive frame of mind despite the challenges of our business.

Candidate Biography

District 15 (Adams, Juneau, Monroe)



Annette M. Trescher
 Trescher Town-View Dairy
 829 Cashton Avenue
 Cashton, WI 54619
 Residence: Monroe County

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Steven Children – Derek (Emily) Trescher, Kori (Christopher) Blank
When did you begin dairy farming?	1987
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	35 Registered Jerseys 45 registered and Grade Holsteins
Where do you ship your milk?	Foremost Farms, Baraboo
Others actively involved in operation:	Steve, Derek, and myself are the main operators with part-time help from local school kids and other family members.
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	300 acres farmed 50 acres of hay and corn cash crops 100 head of replacement females 30 Jersey steers for beef
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AgSource Board/ Council (2010-present) serving as Vice President since 2013. ▪ Delegate to Cooperative Network (2010-present) ▪ Monroe County Farm Bureau Member, previous President and Secretary ▪ Sparta FFA Alumni Member (previously held offices of Treasurer and Membership Chair)
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jolly Joiners 4-H Club (General Leader since 1997) ▪ Cashton Community Club Member (have been in charge of the annual tractor ride as well as the tractor pull for the past several years)
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	I would like to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin Board because it is very important to me to know where and how my check-off dollars are used. I also find it of utmost importance to be able to educate the general public in regards to their dietary dairy choices and I feel that DFW is the leading place to learn and obtain the most current dairy food information which I can then pass along to the consumer. Another reason for wanting to serve on this Board is to be able to bring input from District 15 as to how better promote dairy in our area based on the cultural and regional differences throughout the state of Wisconsin.
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	Our farm is located within the Village of Cashton limits, making it an easily accessible spot for farm visits and tours. We host many visits and tours each year and have done so since we started dairying together in 1987. I want to become an even better promoter of the dairy industry and I hope that this position will aid in this goal.

Candidate Biography

District 18 (Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Sheboygan, Washington, Waukesha)



Rick Roden
 Roden Echo Valley
 5579 County Road Y West
 Bend WI 53095
 Residence: Washington County

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Melissa Children – Kendra (5), Brooke (3), Rhen (2 months)
When did you begin dairy farming?	2003
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	750 milking and pro cross. Holstein x Montbeliarde x Swedish Red
Where do you ship your milk?	DFA
Others actively involved in operation:	Parents - Bob and Cindy Roden and Uncle Joe Roden
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	2,000 acres farmed; 100 steers and we raise all of our own heifers.
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Farm Bureau. Was on Ozaukee county Board until 2019 as Young Farmer chair. Currently on local scholarship committee ▪ State Farm Bureau Dairy committee for the past 2.5 years. ▪ PDPW peer group, and mentor program. ▪ DBA member
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leader in Knellsville 4-H club ▪ On my church Festival committee ▪ Help organize the Sundae on the Farm event on our farm each year.
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	To continue to learn where our check off dollars go towards, and in return to help spread the word to farmers about check off.
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	I'm a pretty easy going guy. I great passion for the dairy industry, and like to give back where I can. Family is the most important thing to me, growing up with 4 younger sisters, and now having a young family of my own. Between me and my siblings my parent now have 16, soon to be 17 grandkids. So lots of farm help in the years to come.

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Gail Klinkner
 Pine Prairie Jerseys & Klinkner
 Holsteins
 S7304A State Hwy 27
 Viroqua, WI 54665
 Residence: Vernon County

Candidate Biography

District 21 (Crawford, Vernon)

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Rob Reagan, Garrison, Rubi, Ginger, Rylan
When did you begin dairy farming?	2002
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	55 Cows, Registered Holsteins and Jerseys
Where do you ship your milk?	Westby Cooperative Creamery, Westby
Others actively involved in operation:	Our immediate family
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	66 acres farmed; Raise sheep, pigs and other livestock; 50 young stock, beef etc.
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vernon Co Dairy Youth Fund Committee member ▪ Vernon Co Jr Dairy Club, Advisor ▪ Vernon Co Dairy Promotion Committee, Treasurer ▪ 2021 Vernon Co Dairy Breakfast Co-Chair ▪ Vernon Co Holstein Association, board member ▪ Wisconsin Holstein Association ▪ Wisconsin Jersey Breeders, 2023 National Convention Co-Chair ▪ Tainter Creek Farmer Lead Watershed Group ▪ Valley Stewardship member ▪ Vernon County Cattleman’s Association
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Night Out, planning committee ▪ Franklin Lutheran Church
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	<p>I want to continue to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin Board to support our dairy farmers and ensure that our check off dollars are being spent in the most efficient ways possible.</p> <p>In my first term I learned a lot of information about the great work that is done throughout the state of Wisconsin and the United States to drive sales of Wisconsin Dairy Products and build trust in our dairy farmers. I feel it necessary to be involved in the direction that our dollars are spent to ensure that we are known for our outstanding dairy products far and wide. Further, I want to ensure that the dairy industry is thriving for the next generation.</p>
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	<p>I am passionate about the dairy industry. There is no better way to raise a family. Our family is very involved in local dairy promotions and industry organizations. We all enjoy being involved in our community. I enjoy working with youth to develop their leadership abilities and prepare them for their future endeavors.</p>



Virgil Haag
Virhada Holsteins
9158 Britt Valley Road,
Mount Horeb, WI 53572
Residence: Dane County

Candidate Biography

District 24 (Dane, Jefferson)

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Dawn Children – Kody, Karsen
When did you begin dairy farming?	1984
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	180 Registered Holsteins
Where do you ship your milk?	Klondike Cheese Company, Monroe WI
Others actively involved in operation:	Kody and Karsen
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	300 acres farmed; 275 young stock, beef cattle etc.
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ PDPW- Mentor▪ Mt. Horeb FFA Alumni Board of Directors-past President▪ WI Master Farmers Org- 2022 Steering Committee▪ Holstein Breeders- Natl, WI and Dane County- past President
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ ELC Church▪ Deercreek Sportsman Club
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	I am passionate about the dairy industry and believe in taking an active role in promoting our quality products. Working to support dairy farmers is important to me and I am humbled to be able to continue to represent you.
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	Understanding the supply chain and consumers demands for dairy is critical to improving our bottom line. I enjoy working with people who influence and believe in what we do as dairy farmers.

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Tina Hinchley
 Hinchley's Dairy Farm
 2844 Hwy. 73
 Cambridge, WI 53523
 Residence: Dane County

Candidate Biography

District 24 (Dane, Jefferson)

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Duane Children - Curtis, Spencer, Anna and Catherine
When did you begin dairy farming?	1996
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	240 registered Holstein cow with a couple of colored breeds for diversity
Where do you ship your milk?	Dairy Farmers of America-it differs with processors need the milk for cheese or fluid
Others actively involved in operation:	Duane Hinchley, Anna Hinchley and 3 high school students
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	2,500 acres farmed; Raise chickens, pigs, goats, sheep other livestock; 250 young stock, beef etc.
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board member ▪ Wisconsin Farmers Union board member ▪ Wisconsin Beef Council member
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cambridge 4-H club leader ▪ Cambridge FFA Alumni
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	It has been an organization that directly impacts milk sales in Wisconsin with promotions and research.
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	2013 Monsanto Farm Mom - Midwest
Spouse/Children	I feel driven be knowledgeable about our Wisconsin Dairy Industry. I want to know more about how DFW is working for Wisconsin Dairy Farms. I am interested in learning more about our check-off dollars contributing to programs, social media, and websites that help move our milk and create demand for milk products. Being a part of DFW will enable me to learn and share with others all the benefits that this organization does for every single one of the dairy farmers in Wisconsin.
When did you begin dairy farming?	<p>I have been hosting dairy farm tours for over 25 years. Educating thousands of school children, families, and international visitors annually about dairy farming and the milk that cows make for so many nutritional dairy products that we all enjoy. Being a spokes person for our dairy industry, sharing our cows and our farm, allows me to be the farmer our visitors think about when they are in the dairy department of their local grocery store. I am proud to be the dairy farmer they think of when they are asked "Who is your Farmer?"</p> <p>I also write a column in the Dairy Star Newspaper, a bi-weekly newspaper.</p>

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Candidate Biography

District 24 (Dane, Jefferson)



Carrie Mess

****Farm Name****

N7758 Hwy Q Johnson Creek
WI 53038

Residence: Jefferson County

Spouse/Children	Spouse – Patrick Children – Silas and Benjamin
When did you begin dairy farming?	2009
How many cows do you milk? Breed(s)	100 Holstein, Jersey, Normande, and crossbred cows
Where do you ship your milk?	Prairie Farms
Others actively involved in operation:	Husband and his parents, Clem and Cathy Mess
How many acres do you farm? Other farm facts:	250 acres farmed
Ag-related organizations or affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dairy Girl Network-Founding Board Member▪ AgSource Cooperative- Council Director▪ DMI Innovation Center- Committee Member▪ Compeer Financial- Client Advisory Council Member
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ I work with Second Harvest Food Bank on various projects, including growing sweet corn on our farm that is donated to the food bank. As well as helping them to develop their Adopt A Cow program.
Why do you want to serve on the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin board?	Before I joined our farm, I had a career in marketing and advertising. Over 13 years ago I started connecting with the non farming public through social media and my blog. I have learned so much about what our end customer wants to understand about dairy farming and dairy products. I want to use my experience in both marketing and having thousands of conversations with our customers to better our state's dairy industry.
What else should dairy producers in your area know about you?	I am running for this board seat for several reasons. First, I want to help create plans for our dollars to be used effectively. Additionally, I want to make sure that our state's diverse farms and farmers have a voice and are represented in all that our check-off does. Lastly, I owe so much to this industry and I want to give back with my time and energy to continue to grow Wisconsin's phenomenal dairy heritage for future generations.

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